IN 7 ISSUES, IT'S ALL OVER!

IDW

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CLOCKWORKS

LOCKE & KEY

THERE ARE A HUNDRED KEYS IN KEYHOUSE, AND EACH HAS A DIFFERENT IMPOSSIBLE POWER.

THE MOST DANGEROUS OF THEM, THE OMEGA KEY, CAN OPEN A DOOR INTO ANOTHER, TERRIBLE WORLD... A WORLD INHABITED BY CREATURES THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED DEMONS IN A DIFFERENT, LESS ENLIGHTENED AGE.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, SIX TEENAGE FRIENDS, LED BY RENDELL LOCKE, SHARED THE KEYS OUT AMONGST ONE ANOTHER, AND WERE BLESSED WITH MAGIC, WONDER, AND HAPPINESS.

WITH THE LAST DAYS OF HIGH SCHOOL APPROACHING, RENDELL SUGGESTS A FINAL ADVENTURE: A TRIP INTO THE DROWNING CAVE, TO FIND THE DOOR TO THAT OTHER WORLD, AND LET A SINGLE DEMON THROUGH.

WHEN IT CROSSES THE DOORWAY, THE DEMON SHOULD BE TRANSFORMED INTO THE WHISPERING IRON, THE STUFF FROM WHICH ALL THE KEYS ARE FORGED. RENDELL HOPES TO USE THIS REALITY-BENDING METAL TO CRAFT A KEY OF HIS OWN.

IS IT REALLY ANY SURPRISE, THOUGH, THAT OPENING A DOOR TO LET IN DEVILS SOON THROWS ALL THEIR PLANS TO HELL?

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NO. DON'T. WHY?

IF YOU KNEW HOW GOOD THIS FELT, YOU WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED I'M DOING IT.

YOU'D BE SURPRISED I DIDN'T DO IT SOONER.

IN YOU GO.

WE'RE ALMOST DONE HERE.

ELLIE, YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS, BUT YOU DID THE RIGHT THING... LEADING ME HERE. GIVING ME BACK ALL OF THESE STOLEN NOTIONS AND MEMORIES.

IT MAY NOT FEEL RIGHT... BUT THEN AGAIN, I GUESS YOU'RE NOT FEELING MUCH OF ANYTHING RIGHT NOW, ARE YOU?!

TAK

OH! HI THERE, LITTLE GIRL.

WAIT—I *KNOW* YOU. YOU'RE... *DUNCAN*. RENDELL'S LITTLE BROTHER. THE KID WHO LIKES TO PLAY WITH THE GENDER KEY.

NNN.

DUNNNN-CAN? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

COME BACK!

DUNNNNNN-CAN! I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

RUNNING.

OH. ANY IDEA WHERE?

ELLIE PROLLY JOGGED UP TO KEYHOUSE TO SIT AND CRY OVER THAT GREASY LITTLE NITWIT WHO DUMPED HER.

YOU OUGHT TO LEAVE HER BE. GOIN' AROUND WITH YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS IS WHAT GOT HER SO MESSED UP. I KNEW LETTIN' HER GO TO THE ACADEMY WAS A MISTAKE. SHE'S A TOWNIE. SHE'S ALWAYS GONNA BE A TOWNIE.

THAT'S A VERY... INTERESTING LINE OF THOUGHT ON CLASS DIVISION IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, MRS. WHEDON.

WELL, THANKS! SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.

ELLIE? I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE BACK HERE.

ARE YOU—

—OKAY?

AH. AH, GEEZ.

HEY, DUNCAN.

REMEMBER HOW YOU WANTED TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BLACK DOOR?

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE YOUR CHANCE.

YOU'RE GOING TO— *HMN?* SHIT. CHO?

HUNH.

RIGHT.

GO FIND RENDELL. GET THE KEEPERS OF THE KEYS. NOW!

SHADOWS, RISE! FIND DODGE! FIND HIM AND BRING HIM HERE!

BRING DODGE HERE. ON THE GROUND.

WHAT THE FUCK—

—IS THIS GAY SHIT?

WHAT'S GAY ABOUT IT? I'M ALL GIRL, MARK. I FEEL LIKE A GIRL, AND RESPOND LIKE A GIRL.

NOT A TRANNY. NOT A GUY PRETENDING. A GIRL WITH GIRL TITS AND GIRL HIPS AND ALL THE OTHER GREAT GIRL PARTS. I COULDN'T EVEN FIT IN MY GUY CLOTHES ANYMORE.

I JUST HAD TIME TO GRAB A DRESS WHEN YOUR BIG, BAD BUDDIES HAULED ME OUT. AND NOW HERE I AM. YOURS TO DO WITH AS YOU PLEASE.

SAY, IS THAT A KEY IN YOUR POCKET, OR ARE YOU JUST HAPPY TO SEE ME?

SHUT UP. THIS IS FUCKED. I—*AH*—PUT ON YOUR DRESS. P-PLEASE.

AW, MARK. YOU'LL NEVER, EVER HAVE A GIRL THIS HOT ON HER KNEES IN FRONT OF YOU AGAIN. I'M DISAPPOINTED.

YOU KNOW, KIM TOPHER WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU.

YOU *ARE* GOING TO DIE A VIRGIN.

AHHMMM... HELLO?

KIM! I—HEY —I—THIS ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.

IT ISN'T?

HM. TOO BAD. PERSONALLY I'VE THOUGHT THE TWO OF YOU BELONGED TOGETHER SINCE SOPHOMORE YEAR.

I LOVE YOU GUYS, YOU KNOW. I—DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

THIS CAN'T BE GOOD.

TK-
TK-
TK-
TK-

MARK? CAN YOU HEAR ME, MARK?

I HATE TO BOTHER YOU WHILE YOU'RE DYING.

BUT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW WHICH OF YOUR FRIENDS WAS PUT IN CHARGE OF HIDING THE OMEGA KEY.

CAN YOU TELL ME THAT?

AAAAAAAA!

PRETTY PLEASE?

THE OTHERS WILL BE COMING AND I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE WHEN THEY ARRIVE.

SO HURRY UP OR I'LL *REALLY* HAVE TO HURT YOU.

PROMISE YOU'LL LEAVE ELLIE HERE WITH ME AND I'LL TELL YOU WHICH ONE OF THEM HID IT.

OH NO, MARK. HAVE YOU BEEN HARBORING A SECRET CRUSH ON ELLIE?

TOO BAD YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO GET TO FUCK HER. I DID. SHE MAKES THESE CUTE LITTLE PIGLET SOUNDS WHEN SHE'S COMING. UNHK. UNHK.

FUCK YOU.

SHADOWS, BRING ELLIE OVER HERE.

SHADOW CENTURION. MARK IS GOING TO TELL ME WHICH OF HIS FRIENDS IS CARRYING THE OMEGA KEY.

ONCE HE DOES, I WANT YOU TO REMAIN HERE, AND PROTECT THEM BOTH FROM HARM. YOU ARE TO TAKE NO FURTHER ORDERS FROM ME THIS EVENING.

THERE YOU GO, MARK. ELLIE IS SAFE. FOR TONIGHT. UNLESS YOU DON'T TELL. IF YOU DON'T TELL, I'LL START CUTTING HER FACE.

ERIN.

RENDELL DOESN'T LIKE TO TOUCH THE KEYS ANYMORE. SO ERIN TOOK CHARGE OF IT. BUT THAT'S ALL I KNOW.

I HAVE TO GO, MARK. I'M IN A HURRY. THANKS TO YOU, I'M SURE THE REST OF THE KEEPERS ARE ON THE WAY.

SHADOWS! BRING ME DUNCAN. HE'S COMING WITH US.

DUNCAN? AUW, AUH. LEAVE HIM OUT OF IT.

HE'S JUST A SWEET KID. DODGE— IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO DUNK—RENDELL WILL FUCKING SLAUGHTER YOU. HE'LL KILL YOU SO BAD THERE WON'T EVEN BE MEMORIES LEFT.

HMMN. WON'T EVEN BE MEMORIES, UNH?

YOU KNOW, THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA. THANKS, MARK.

TAK!

LET'S SEE... SOMETHING TO WRITE WITH, PLEASE. AND TAPE. AND, I THINK—

TAKE THIS TO ELLIE'S. HIDE IT SOMEPLACE WHERE SHE'LL NEVER FIND IT... UNTIL THE DAY SHE DOES.

BE CAREFUL WITH THAT. DYING IS FINE FOR OTHER PEOPLE, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S FOR ME. THIS IS MY RESET BUTTON IF THINGS DON'T WORK OUT IN THE CAVE.

EMERGE

CASE OF EMERGEN
BREAK GLASS

SAMURAI—MAKE SURE THEY KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING.

I KNOW YOU CAN'T HEAR ME, ELLIE. BUT I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE.

I DON'T WANT TO DIE ALONE

AUW. JESUS. MARK!

ELLIE!

SHE'S OKAY. SHE'S BREATHING.

LET'S GO.

DUNCAN FOR LOL

WELL. HERE WE ALL ARE. WHERE THIS THING WAS ALWAYS HEADED.

YOU BETTER HAVE IT... ERIN. I KNOW YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HAD IT LAST. MARK TOLD ME.

FUCK WITH ME AND THIS SHADOW CHAIN AROUND DUNCAN'S LEG TURNS TO A CROCODILE AND BITES HIS LEG OFF.

I'LL SKIP THE THREATS. YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF—UH—DODGE? YOU... UH... YOU'RE A GIRL NOW?

STAY FOCUSED, RENDELL.

I'VE GOT WHAT YOU NEED, DODGE. IT'S RIGHT HERE... IN MY BAG.

KIM, NOW!

DON'T GET UP, DON'T TAKE A STEP. STAY IN THAT SPOT.

IF YOU TRY AND TAKE A STEP YOUR HEART WILL STOP.

GOT YOU!

ANH!

OUCH! I FELT THAT!

FELT IT, BUT DIDN'T *HEAR* IT. OH, ERIN. YOU THINK I WASN'T READY FOR YOU TO COME ARMED?

I DIDN'T GET *ALL* OF MY MEMORIES BACK INTO MY HEAD—I WAS FEELING A BIT RUSHED—BUT I THINK I GOT EVERYTHING I NEED.

AA!

I'LL BRING THIS CAVE DOWN AROUND OUR EARS, DODGE!

I'LL BURY US ALL!

OH, I DON'T THINK SO. AND BURY DUNCAN AND THE GIRL YOU LOVE?

BESIDES, THE SHADOWS ARE MORE THAN STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP THE ROOF UP.

THE KEY. I WANT THE OMEGA KEY.

I DIDN'T BRING IT— STUPID.

NO, THAT WOULD'VE BEEN TOO EASY. BUT YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS. AND IF YOU WON'T TELL—

THERE ARE OTHER WAYS.

UNH.

OH! OH, NO! MARK!

ELLIE. DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. YOU LOVED THE GUY. I UNDERSTAND -WOULDA DONE JUST AS STUPID OVER YOU. DODGE IS GOING TO THE CAVE. GOT DUNCAN. THERE'S A WAY DOWN HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT. THERE'S A LADDER. IT MUST COME UP BEHIND THE WELLHOUSE. BE GOOD TO YOURSELF. -MARK

NO! DODGE! PLEASE! YOU'RE TAKING—

EVERYTHING? HM. WELL, I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR. AND BESIDES, ERIN WAS HAPPY TO TAKE AWAY A PILE OF *MY* MEMORIES.

HUH! SHE REALLY *DIDN'T* KNOW! MARK WAS WRONG! OR... *LYING.*

LYING! HOW ABOUT THAT! AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT MARK WAS A *SHIT* ACTOR.

WHAA-?

OH, GOD. ELLIE... DODGE STRIPPED ERIN TO NOTHING. HER THOUGHTS... HER MEMORIES... ALL GONE. IT'S ALL BURIED.

WHITE, IT'S WHITE.

ELLIE! WHAT WERE YOU *THINKING?* IT'S TOO *LATE* FOR YOU TO BE A HERO.

YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN WITH *ME.*

HAAUK. HKK.

I THINK I'VE GOT RIBS STICKING INTO LUNGS AND SPLEENS AND STUFF.

BUT IT DOESN'T HURT. NOTHING HURTS. REALLY! I STILL FEEL PRETTY GOOD!

LÄ! LÄ SHUB-NIGGARAUTH!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

AND DROWN THIS FUCKING HOLE. NO ONE IS EVER GETTING TO THE BLACK DOOR AGAIN.

WHEN DO YOU LEAVE?

TOMORROW.

HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE ERIN?

YEAH. SHE STILL KNOWS WHO I AM. NOTHING ELSE, BUT SHE KNOWS THAT.

I GOT RID OF THE OMEGA KEY. I'LL DIE BEFORE ANYONE SEES IT AGAIN. THAT'S A PROMISE.

I'D BE GLAD NEVER TO SEE THIS KEY AGAIN, EITHER.

I'M ALREADY FORGETTING THINGS.

YEAH. THAT'S KEYHOUSE DOING ITS WORK. YOU'LL FORGET MAGIC. FORGET THE WORST OF WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CAVE. THE WORST OF WHAT WE DID.

I'M GLAD. I DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE KEYS.

I HEAR THAT.

YOU KNOW— THERE WAS SOME WHISPERING IRON IN THE CAVE. FROM THE TIME DODGE BECAME... INFECTED.

I TRIED TO MELT IT DOWN TO NOTHING, BUT... YOU CAN'T WIPE THIS STUFF COMPLETELY AWAY. LIKE GUILT, I GUESS.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT? HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF TRYING TO MAKE A—

A KEY? HELL NO. I'M—UNFIT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO WITH IT. MAKE A FISHING LURE, MAYBE.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S FUNNY?

I USED TO IMAGINE MYSELF AS A BIG DEAL, HEIR TO THE LOCKE FAMILY FORTUNE, LIVING HIGH ON THE HOG IN KEYHOUSE.

NOW I NEVER WANT TO COME BACK. I THINK I'D LIKE TO WORK WITH KIDS. IF I COULD STOP ONE KID FROM HURTING HIMSELF— FROM HURTING HIS FRIENDS—THAT'D BE SOMETHING.

YEAH. WELL. I BET YOU'D BE GOOD AT THAT.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO. MOSTLY I JUST WANT TO RUN. RUN AND RUN AND RUN.

BE GOOD, RENDELL. I'D SAY I'LL SEE YOU AROUND, BUT I DON'T THINK I WILL.

Clockworks ~ Chapter Six
Curtain

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